

755 has been made at the time of the house inauguration. Food for the chick-
 776 en—bread, chocolate, tortilla, and liquor—is put in the hole so it will stay
 342 alive for eight days.

The logic of the meal is that the house needs nourishment and for this reason has been fighting with the inmates and causing their illness. After the guests have been fed, the curer marks a cross with a mixture of garlic, creosote, seeds of mustard, and a "hot" herb called poŕŕan, on the center post inside the house and on the corner posts. Like the candles, the cross serves to "blind the eye" of the evil spirits so that they will not reenter the house and talk the spirit of the house into causing harm.

This ceremony replicates that of the house meal at the time of the inauguration (Chapter 1). The music of the guitar and gourd rattle is intended to make both the soul of the house and the souls of the inmates content. Why the curing of the house is always done on Thursday, when "the holy earth is open," is not fully understood by the curers I have questioned; they say, "We have forgotten how to talk to the earth, and consultations may be sought with them if the illness continues.

755 *Prayer.* The curers talk with the soul of the thirteen ancestors of
 776 the world,⁵ to the "spirits of the heaven and of the church," and to saints
 782 of neighboring towns, asking for a good cure. The following prayer is one
 [539] given by the oldest and most honored of the curers:

*Sacred earth, sacred world
 Thirteen holy world, holy flowers
 In the center of another holy world
 Look mother, its clay
 I am a child, its clay.
 Holy heaven, Jesus Christ
 Holy herbs give the spirit*

• [801] 5. The number 13 has significance in the Maya cosmology in the 13 levels of heaven (Thompson 1964:125). The 13 candles set before the curing arch symbolize the 13 holy worlds. The meal for the house spirit includes 13 cigarettes.